



Life's a Hoot!



*The International Owl Collectors' Club,
54 Tiverton Road, Edgware, Middlesex, HA8 6BE, England.*

Greetings! At last, a new issue of the owl collectors' club newsletter - I do apologize for the amount of time, well over a year, since the last one.

As some of you know, I was having a very busy time at the end of last year, and just could not fit everything in. Things which earn money had to take precedence, so the club (which costs me money, even when I'm charging subscriptions, and I hadn't charged anyone in a long time because I knew the newsletters were getting hard to find time for and I didn't want to end up owing anyone anything) had to take a back seat.

My plan was to begin writing and producing a new newsletter when I returned from a new-year break (sharing a self-catering house with some old friends) in January this year. However, when we returned home we were horrified to find that a water pipe in the loft, just past the cold tank, had burst and water had been flowing through our tiny house like a waterfall for at least three days. The place was devastated. To give you an idea, one estimate to fix the structural damage was for almost £20,000 and that didn't include replacing carpets, furniture and all the other stuff which was destroyed.

My owl collection survived, in the main, although almost all the pictures, cards and other paper items which were in albums and boxes were destroyed - they'd have made good papier mache. Mind you, I haven't seen them for eight months or so - we had to pack everything into boxes and send them to various friends and family homes to store for us while the house was fixed. I hope to have them back soon!

Although I got the computer dried out and fixed within 2 months (it was completely unplugged, so despite being able to literally pour water out of all the components, most survived) it was a long while before I got a new printer, and the complications of trying to live in the remaining viable parts of the house while having it fixed were immense. The beginning of October saw me back to having a proper bed (I'd been sleeping on a couch-bed) and with all the rooms decorated and carpeted again. Now it's just replacing furniture etc. and getting everything back and unpacked - including my winter clothes!!

So, that's why I didn't get around to doing a newsletter until now. I'm sorry. Please forgive me and let's get back to having a fun club, OK? See later in the newsletter for information on how to renew your membership - this issue is going free to everyone who had the last one, and everyone who has asked to join since then.

Now read on.

Elise

Owl Barn Gifts

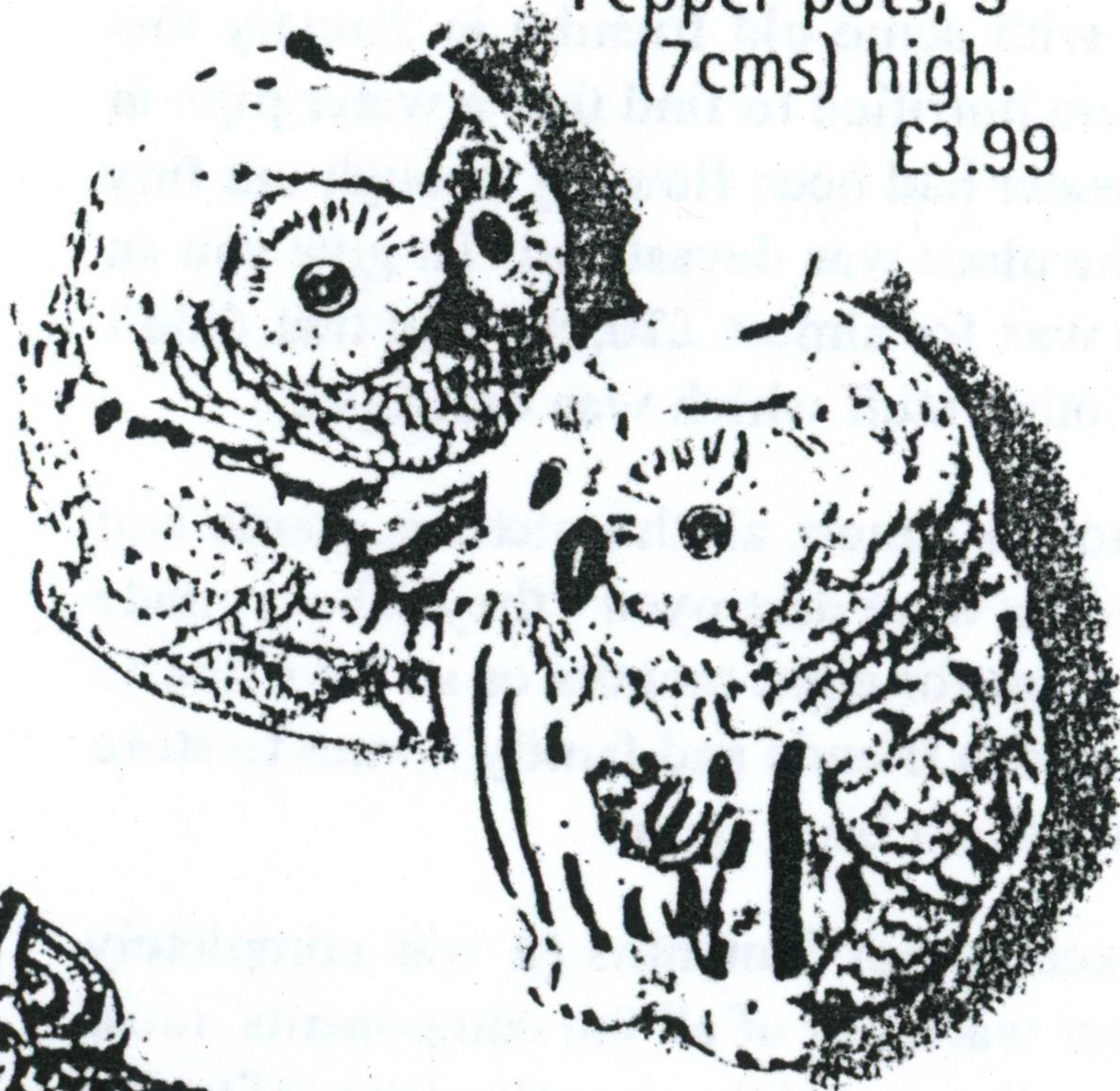
This is a great catalogue, with dozens of owl items! Everything from a cuddly-toy owl backpack via embroidery kits and T-shirts to figurines, bells and hats. Items from £1.99 to £140. Here are a few pictures and prices from the catalogue, which is in full-colour and available from Owl Barn Mail Order, Old School House, Wotham Ling, Diss, Norfolk, IP22 1ST, England, or call 01379 640363 from inside Britain (add the code for dialling out of your country + 44 and remove the zero from the start, if dialling from anywhere else).

"Owl Love" Keepsake Boxes.

English-made stonecast miniature with lid, approx 3" (7.5cms) high. 8324 Antiqued ivory finish £14.99.
8322 Ivory-finish £11.99.



6961 Cruet Set.
Ceramic Salt 'n'
Pepper pots, 3"
(7cms) high.
£3.99



0110 Bottle Opener.
Antiqued pewter finish bottle
opener with owl motif,
5 1/2" long. £3.99.



0112 Decorated Bell.
Finely worked bell in
antiqued pewter, 2 1/2"
(6cms) tall. £5.50.

Three Owls Bird Sanctuary

The sanctuary, which cares for owls, other birds and a few mammals such as hedgehogs and rabbits, is in pretty dire need of funds and of volunteer help, so if you live anywhere near Norden in Rochdale, England, they'd love to see you. Even if you are only visiting! Do call first for

opening hours and directions - 01706 642162. They have items to sell with the three owls logo on them such as teatowels (£2.99), aprons (£5.95) and tote bags (£5.95). The logo looks something like the picture shown here, but better. You can also adopt an owl at £1 a week.



Power Stone?

Here's something else from the USA - it's a piece of rose quartz, like a rounded pebble, and it has the owl shape carved deeply into it, and the carving painted black. It's just under two inches high. The sellers (who didn't put their address on the card, sadly) call them Totem Power Stones (tm) and claim that they are Native American animal figures combined with gemstones to merge their 'intrinsic and metaphysical property, effectively doubling their combined power'.

The owl/rose quartz combination is supposed to be for wisdom, truth and patience.



I'd be less sceptical if I didn't already know what Native Americans in the area it was purchased think about owls (see section on fetishes elsewhere in this newsletter) and there wasn't a modern, European style angel as part of the available carvings! Still, it's a pretty thing and feels nice in the hand, so it's good as a 'touch piece' to handle.

Zuni Fetish Owl

This little owl is carved from Picasso Marble, with inlaid turquoise eyes, and is by Christina Banteah. It's just a little under two inches high. I got it from the Old Territorial Shop in Scottsdale, Arizona, USA (phone - 602 945-5432 from inside the States). They have more, similar, owls by the

same artist, and they cost about \$60. By the way, that's a good price - I saw her work in another store in the same area for \$85, which they said that was a special sale price, marked down from \$105!



What's special about this guy is that he's a Zuni fetish. A fetish (sometimes spelled fetich) is what they call a piece carved as a charm or talisman - to use in a ceremony or just for protection or luck. Zuni is one of the Native American tribes based in the Arizona / New Mexico area.

Owls are one of the creatures which have very different meanings to different

Native American tribes - to some they are the messengers of death, but to others, including the Zuni, they are protectors of the home and village. Ground owls (such as the burrowing owls, and the owls which live in the cacti) have significance to hunting, and all birds take prayers to the sky and clouds, so they are applicable to rains and blessings.

If you'd like to learn more about fetishes, I recommend the book 'A Guide to Zuni Fetishes and Carving' by Kent McManis, which is also available from the above store.

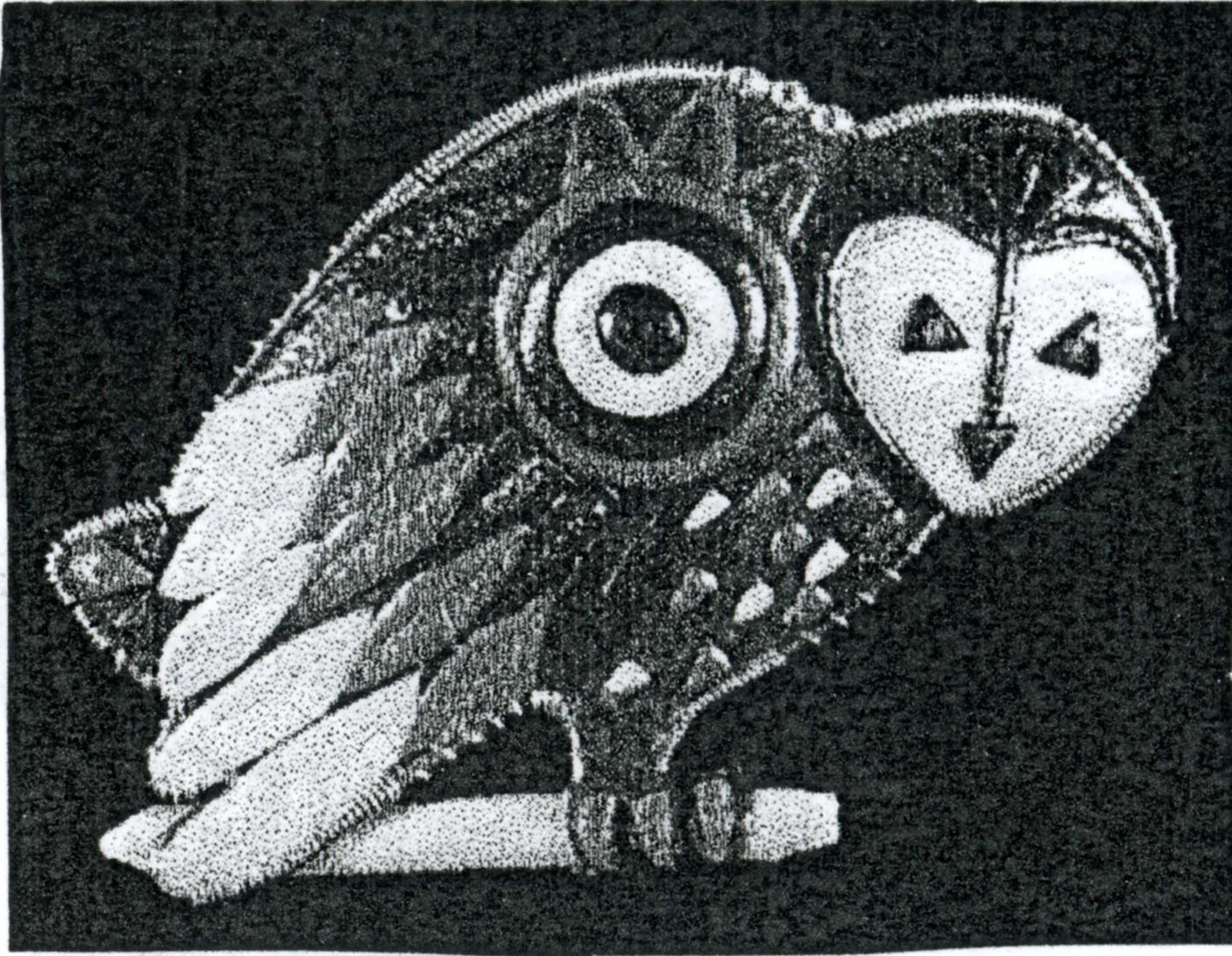
Mushroom Owls!

These owls are created from large mushrooms which grow on the base and trunks of birch trees! The mushrooms are boiled and sliced paper thin, then applied to a foam-moulded shape. The layers of mushroom are cut, glued and applied to form the wings tail and



beak. The owl is painted with watercolours and seeds are used for the eyes. Mushroom Owls are available from Owloholics, 37 Broadpark Road, Livermead, Torquay, Devon, TQ2 6UP, England.

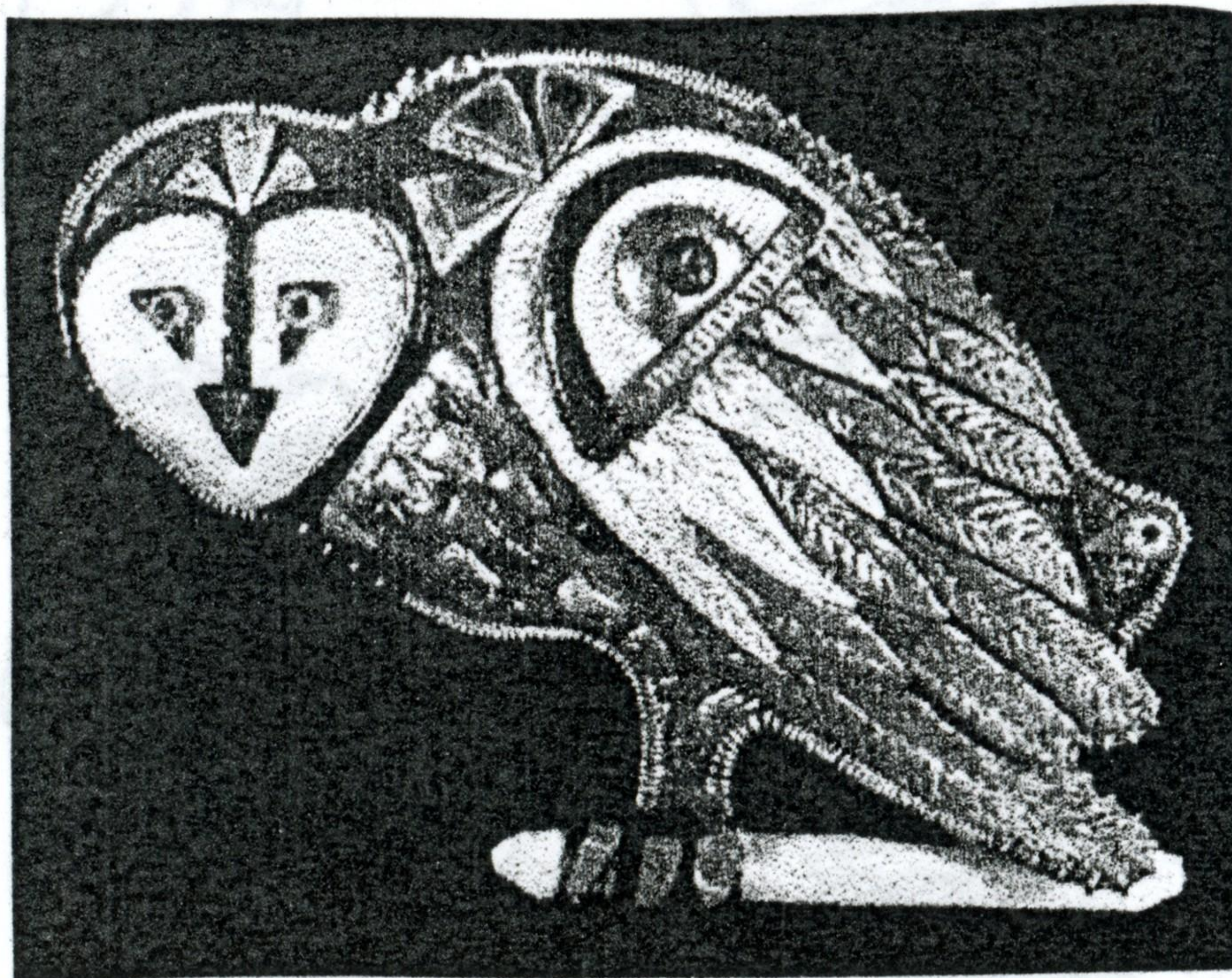
Quirkworks!



These are two pins, beautifully made of polymer clay, wire and beads by Linda Goff, the owner of Quirkworks. They are shown a little under their actual size. The owls are wonderful browns, creams and golds and each is different because they are made completely by

hand. I wish I could show you these in colour - they are wonderful, and really worth seeing.

Linda makes a hand shaped, wire framework outline for each piece, adds some beads and winds fine wire around the frame. She then pushes the wirework into the clay, trims off the excess and decorates the surface with more clay, finely sculpted, metallic powders and sometimes found objects. The owls are sitting on little wooden perches.

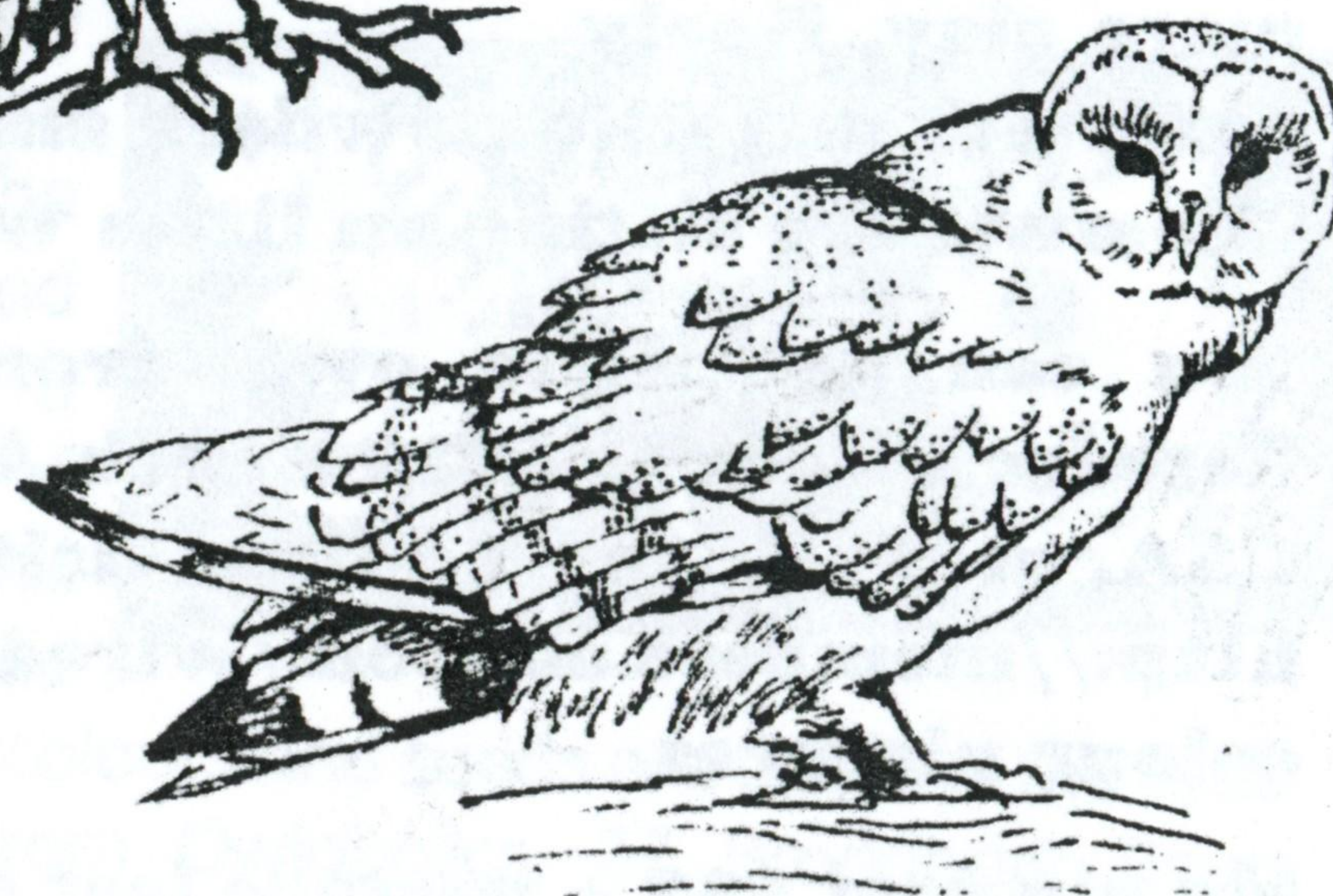
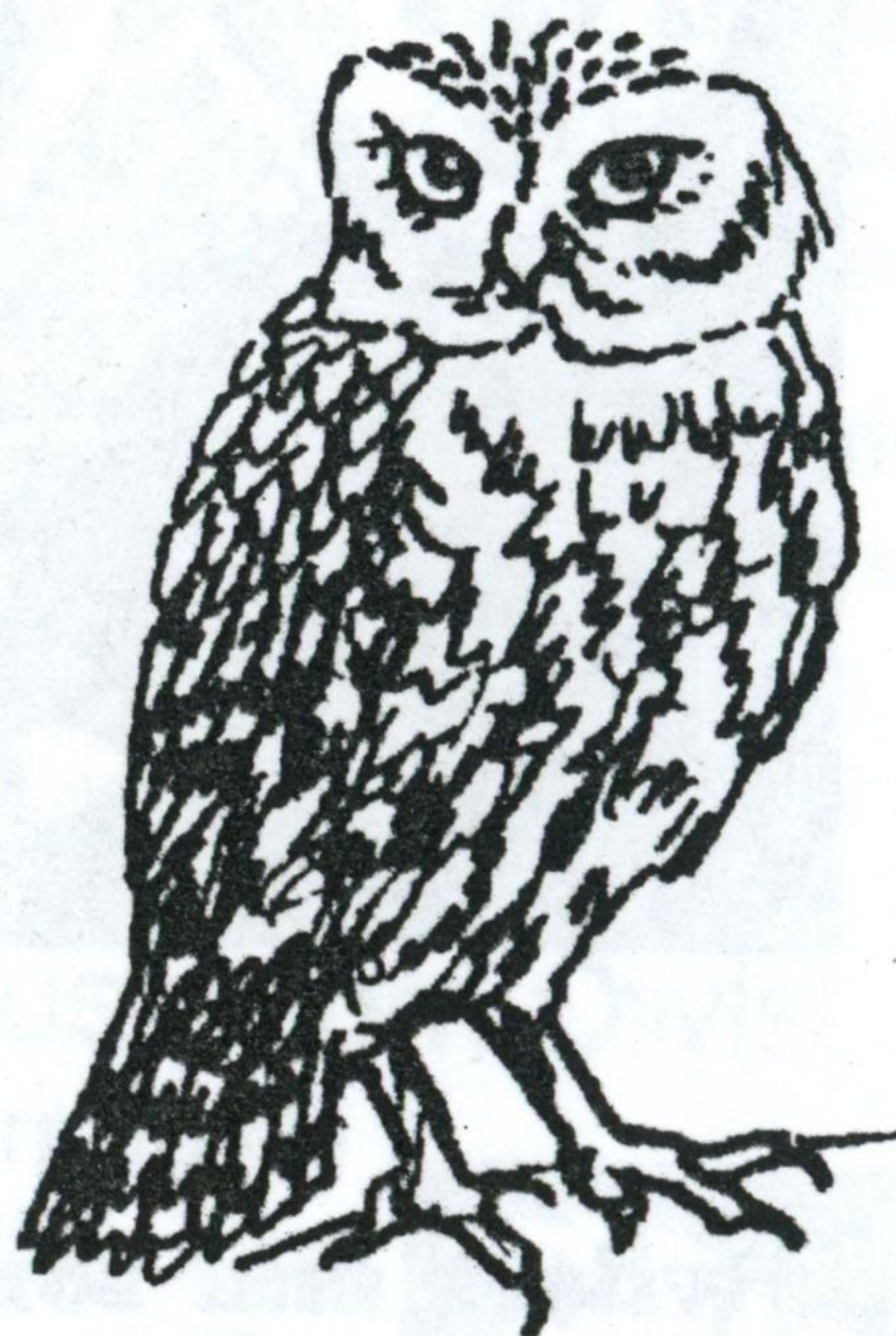


You can get these owls from Linda Goff, Interaction Research Group, 1220 E. 4th Avenue, Olympia, WA 98506 USA, or if you are on-line, visit the Quirkworks webpage, <http://members.aol.com/wire4clay2/index.html> to see colour pictures.

My pin cost \$32 + postage last spring.

Rubber Stamps from

These are some of the owls available from my little rubber stamp company - I'm showing them - but I do show you ones from other companies and tell you where to get them in this range too. Should you wish to get a catalogue of these and other rubber stamps in 2664, Montgomery Village MD 20886-2664, U.S.A. if you are in the USA or Canada. Middlesex, HA8 6BE if you are in Britain. If you are elsewhere, send banknotes in your



m The Crafty Owl.

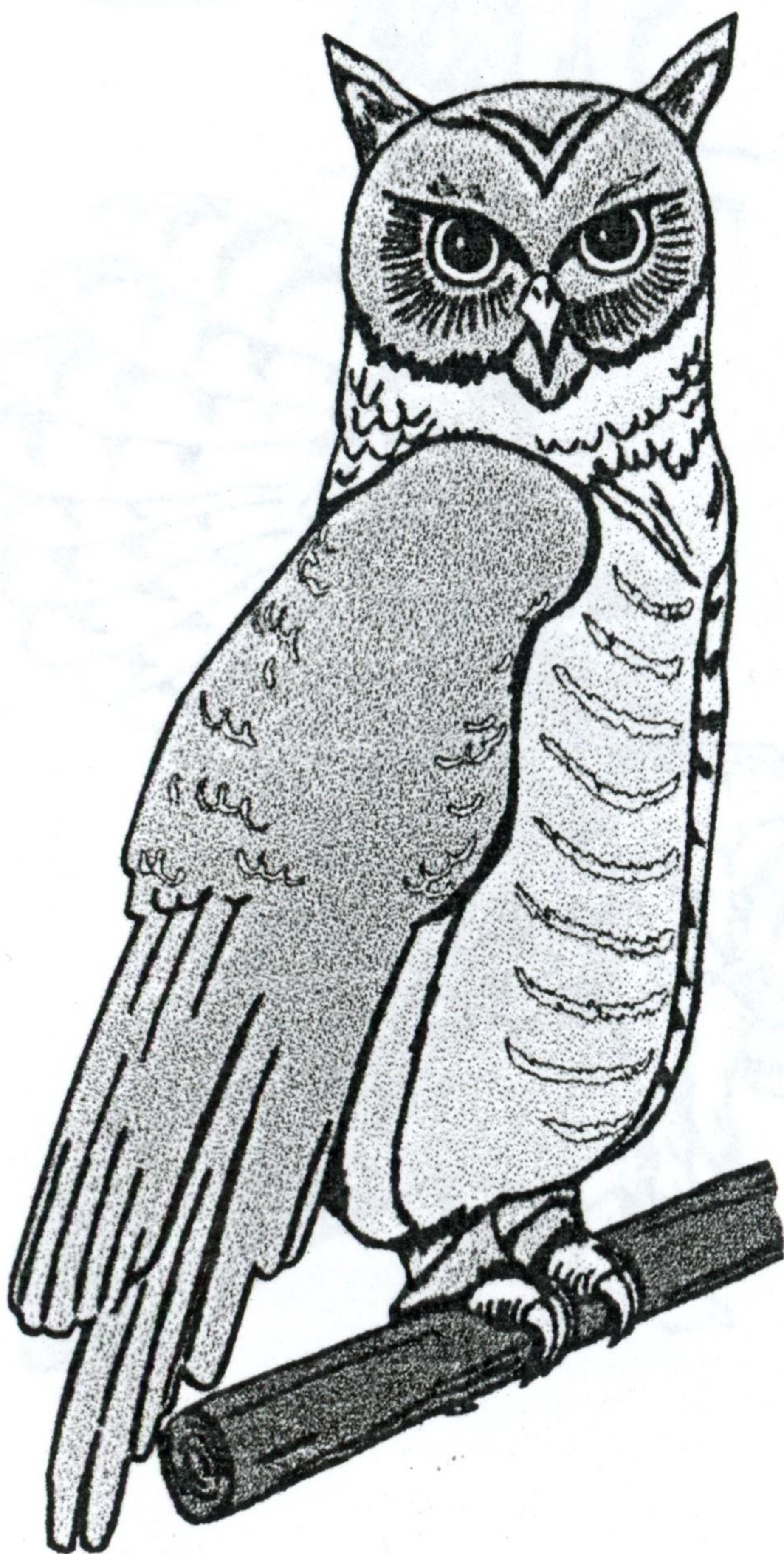
g you the images because I think you will like them. I hope no-one minds, as I am selling
when I find them. They are all shown actual size. The owls on the front cover are from
he range (there are plenty of non-owl ones) you can send \$3 to Puffin Projects, PO Box
or £2 in British postage stamps to The Crafty Owl Stamps, 54 Tiverton Road, Edgware,
ur currency to approximately that value to the British address.



Upcoming Owl Sale

Dr. Gene C. Bovee and Don Weichert Auctions will be marketing his late wife's Owl Collection of over 2,000 collectibles. Elizabeth, "Owlmost Anything", collected Owly items since the beginning of the 1980's from their many travels and visits to Midwest flea markets, antique shows, shops and craft shows. Owl related motif categories include selections of costume jewellery pins, pendants, pottery, ceramic, chalk, china, porcelain, glass, wood, fabric, embroidery, nice selection of postcards from the early 1900's - including leather post cards, Halloween cards, decorations, trade advertising cards, framed and unframed owl related advertising, Hallmark owl Christmas ornaments, printing block cuts, burn wood items, wall pockets, letter openers, salt and pepper shakers, pitchers, cookie jars, refrigerator magnets, smoking collectibles - late 1800's Spanish cast iron owl tobacco jars, cigar ads, boxes, tins, old desk set with ink bottle holder and a Lalique crystal owl. They are presently working on a complete listing and will be marketing a portion of the collection at antique shows. They will confirm an auction time and Midwest location for the Spring of 1998.

For more information, contact Don Weichert Auctions, 6721 NW Church Lane, Topeka, Kansas 66618-2033 Phone /fax 785 246-0253 (from inside the USA) or Email DMWeichert@aol.com



Owl's Nest

Owl's Nest, for those of you who don't yet know, is a terrific supplier of all things owly! They have a wonderful catalog, and if you are on-line you can visit <http://www.newportnet.com/owlsnest/>, where the very latest items are on view in colour. You'll also find owl events, owl trivia, hoots, and links to other interesting pages there. Oh, and you can contact them on owlsnest@newportnet.com too.

If you are not able to access the web page, a black-and-white paper catalogue can be obtained from PO Box 990, Depoe Bay, OR 97341-0990 USA - if you are in the USA, call them on 541 765 2473 or 1888 345 OWLS for details.

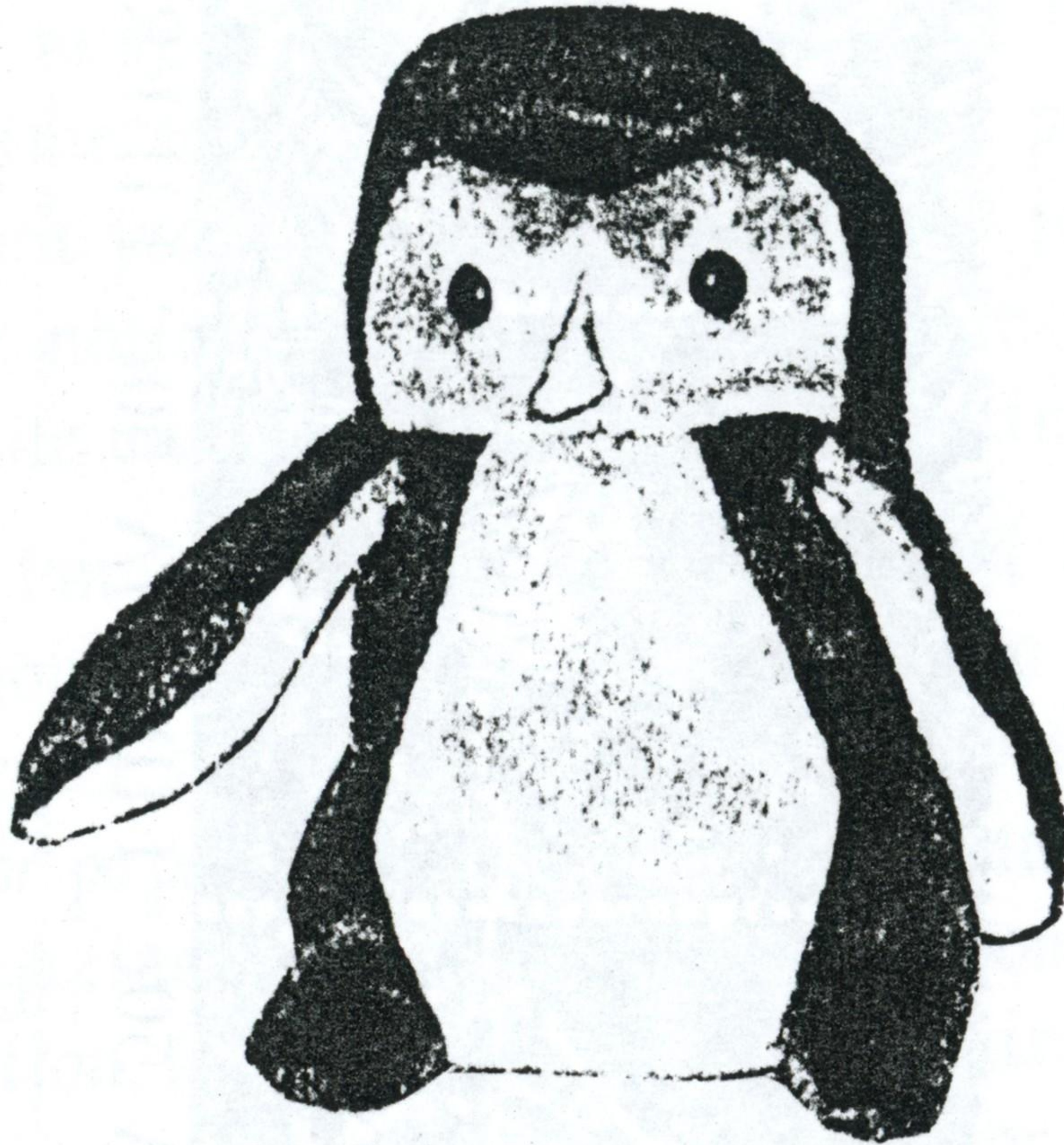
Hoot the Owl

This is Hoot the Owl. He's about 5 inches tall and was 'born' on 9th August 1995, and his poem goes:

'Late to bed, late to rise,
Nevertheless Hoot's quite
wise.

Studies by candlelight,
nothing new,

Like a president, do you
know Whooo?'

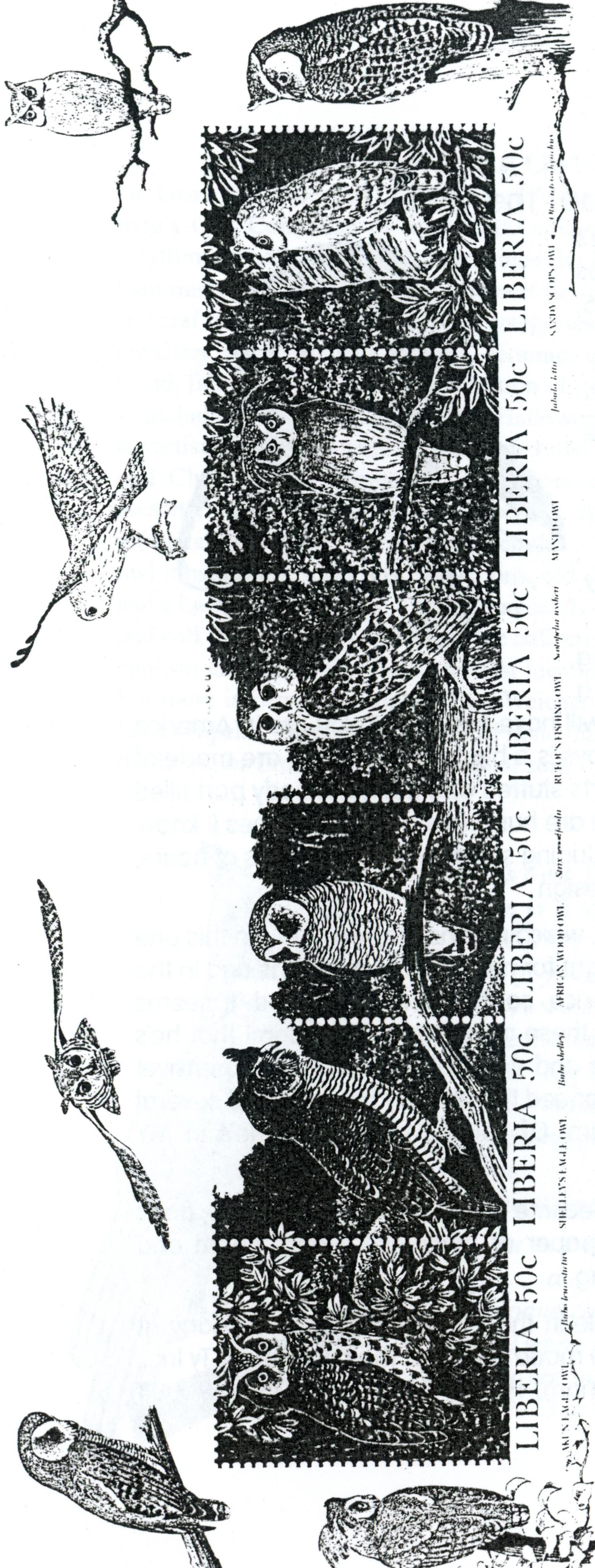


What the heck am I taking about? Well, Hoot is a 'Beanie Baby', which you will have heard of if you live in America because collecting these toys is a big fad there. They are made of plush fabric with some parts stuffed and the main body part filled like a bean-bag doll. There are hundreds of different ones (I know someone who has 140) including several rabbits and lots of bears, but Hoot is the only owl design.

He's recently been 'retired', which means they don't make this one any more, but he was bought for me about two months ago in the USA at the usual selling price, so they are still around. It seems from the web page about these guys (<http://www.ty.com>) that he's now a lot more collectable and desirable (read, more expensive) because he's retired, and indeed I've already been offered several times what he cost for him. Of course, I said no - he's in MY collection now!

If you want the any toy to become collectable, not only these, don't take off any of the tags, paper or otherwise. Hoot's poem and birthday are on his card tag.

Beanie Babies are available in the US, England and Germany at least, although the toys are made in China. The company is Ty Inc., Oakbrook IL USA, or Fareham, Hants, PO15 5TX UK, or 90008 Nurnberg, Deutschland.



Postage Stamp Owls

This is a rather lovely 'Sheetlet' of a recent set of owl stamps from Liberia. I've put it sideways on the page so you can see it full-size. I wish I could show you it in colour - the outer images are monochrome - grey, really, no strong black, but the six stamps are full-colour artwork. It's a very nice set - I got it for £3.95 from Sovereign Stamps, PO Box 123, Sutton, Surrey, SM1 4WH, England.

I think the Rufous Fishing Owl is a particularly good rendition and I like the way the background continues along the row of stamps - not that I think you'd find all those owls that close together.

I know quite a few of you collect owl stamps - why not write a little about a few of your favourites, get a photocopy of them and let me have it as an article for a later newsletter? Please? You don't have to type or format the page, I can do that. If you collect some other type of owl item in particular, write about that!

Subscribing to Life's a Hoot Membership of the Owl Collectors' Club.

The above two things are more-or-less the same. Since I find it really hard to find the time to do newsletters, I can't promise how many will appear each year, although I plan to try for four again. As you may have noticed, I've given up stapling them together because of the time and backache that was costing!

With this in mind, all I'm asking you to do if you'd like to continue to be a member (or in some cases, if you'd like to join) is to send me a card or a letter stating your interest. If you could possibly do so, use a card or paper with an owl on it, or include an owl picture (maybe a magazine cutting), owl stamp or something - or a photo of your collection. If you could write something about owls in general or collecting owls, or provide information and/or photos about owls seen around, please please send that too. I'll probably ask you to do this every couple of issues - it will let me know who is really still interested, so I'm not making copies and spending postage unnecessarily, and keep me in touch with all of you, which will I hope give me more to write about.

By the way, I propose to put out a list of members with the next issue, so you can write to each other and even meet up if you find you live near to others, so put in your letter if you DON'T want to go on that list.

Oh, and let me know if you have trouble reading the small print of the newsletter - I can copy it to a larger size if you need it.



